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George Wilson
AN ADDRESS,

To the People of New-England.



222
1796

PEOPLE OF NEW ENGLAND,

IN the name of every thing that is dear and valuable, your happiness, the fame of your ancestors, the recollection of your revolutionary services, your sectional and national honor, and the duty you owe your country at this crisis, I invoke your attention to its present condition. I entreat you to reflect seriously on the following view of our public affairs, and of the conduct of government, in particular, as it relates to those things which at present interest your feelings.

It is offered to your consideration by one, who was born, educated, and lives among you : who is not elevated above, nor depressed below a participation in your sufferings and enjoyments : and who knows the high importance of your commerce, which he will never cease to cherish.

He asks your confidence for your government, which is your shield and protection and without which you must experience all the evils of discord and civil war.—He asks it, not when you are called to declare a preference for a favorite candidate; but after an important election, which has decided for years the course of government. At a time when the two great powers who rule three quarters of the globe, are threatening this republic with destruction; and attempts are made to subvert the institutions of civil order, to humble your government, or to dis sever the union, and introduce all the evils which have afflicted Europe for centuries.

While foreign and civil wars have for seventeen years marched over Europe carrying death and desolation in their train, while nation after nation has been overturned, and tyranny on tyranny generated—while not a nation of the Old World has escaped these incalculable calamities, we have remained a quiet, prosperous, and happy people.

But the day of our adversity has arrived; our example has excited hatred, our happiness envy; and those warring powers, who never united in any thing else, have manifested a unity of sentiment in their desire to destroy our republic.

1857

France, guided by a policy which threatens the independence of all nations, and ruled by a chief, whose law is power, whose reason pride, and whose object universal empire, has forbidden our trading with England ; has sequestered and confiscated the property of our merchants ; burned their ships ; and insolently, though indirectly, told us that we must go to war for, or against her.

Will this nation submit to their insults and injuries ? Will it bend to those decrees which to us are as impotent as they are insulting ? It will not. What then shall be done ? We cannot levy war on her, for with her we cannot come in contact. She has no commerce to seize, *no adjacent territories to conquer*.

It only remains for us to suspend all intercourse with her, and to deprive her of the benefits of our commerce.

England, humbled by our independence, and revengeful in her temper, has never ceased labouring to promote disunion, to check our rising importance, and to destroy our happiness.

To her other passions has been added, by our commercial prosperity, that of jealousy.

Next to averting the evils inflicted and threatened by France, her first and most unremitting endeavours are, and have been, to cripple our navigation.

Before the treaty of 1794, she harassed and pillaged our commerce on the high seas, she retained our posts on the northern frontiers eleven years, and instigated the savages of those regions to war ; supplied them with provisions and ammunition, with the rifle and the tomahawk, and by them desolated our infant settlements. Since that period she has invariably pursued a system destructive to our commerce, unheard of in other days, and unknown to the law of nations—By issuing decrees of blockade where she had not even a pretended force to support them.—By laying invidious taxes on her manufactures for our consumption which were not extended to other nations ; and by unjust seizures and condemnations. She has seized thousands of our citizens while under our protection ; and at the point of the bayonet, forced them into her service to fight her battles, and to assist in plundering their own neighbours and kindred. She has violated our rights of sovereignty, by seizing our merchantmen in our waters ; by blockading our bays, ports, and harbours ; and in one of them, by destroying the life of a citizen. Our demand of “ satisfaction for the past and security for the future ” proved fruitless. Our merchants petitioned for protection and redress. A partial non-importation law was passed, to take effect at a day then distant, that time might be allowed her to reflect on the consequences which must result from her continuance in this unparalleled

system of aggression. The ministers of this nation were directed to assure her of the continuance of our pacific disposition ; and if possible to reclaim her from the course of aggression, to an observance of national law.—A treaty was formed, its merits I know not, but the signature on her part was accompanied with a reservation of the right to destroy our trade if we did not resist the decrees of France in a manner to her satisfactory ; and it was rejected by our executive.

The partial non-importation law was suspended. Again the olive branch was offered, and again it was trodden under foot. What followed ? In June, 1807, your national ship was unexpectedly attacked in your waters, your mariners were killed, while in the service of their country, your *Frigate* lowered its flag—and from it were taken your seamen. The act was disavowed, but mark !! One of your seamen acting under the authority of your government, in contempt of it, and of this nation, was afterwards deliberately put to death.

Is there a point beyond which a nation ought not to bear ? And did we not then reach that point ? Still our love for peace prevailed. Once more we tried negotiation, and once more we met insult and contumely.

Believing we feared war, and governed by no principle other than misjudged self interest, she resolved to annihilate our commerce, except with herself.

In November, 1807, she, by her orders in council, resolved to seize and condemn all our commerce bound to any port, except Sweden, of the continent of Europe.

In short, in the language of that instrument which pronounced us a nation, “she has taxed us without our consent, cut off our trade with most parts of the world, plundered our seas, and destroyed the lives of our people.”

Between these powers I will not hold the scales of an apothecary, to decide whose offences outweigh by a grain or a scruple—Nor will I detain you to refute those suggestions in favor of either which are offered by their partizans, or arise from jealousy.

In this situation, your executive recommended, and congress established an embargo. Of the orders in council he had certain, though not official intelligence, and the suggestions of opposition to the contrary, are founded at best in error. Here was presented that case in which politicians of all parties have agreed that an embargo is both proper and necessary. A government informed of facts which clearly proved that the interests of commerce were exposed to imminent hazard, yet so circumstanced that it could not with propriety communicate this knowledge.

In a similar case, Washington recommended an embargo ; and Jefferson followed the example.

This measure presents itself in two lights. First—As a precautionary measure ; to save our merchants from the evils of seizure, condemnation, and confiscation ; to bring home our wealth, our navigation, and our sailors, that their energies might be applied, when necessary, in support of the nation ; and for the moment to withdraw from that element, where alone we can be materially annoyed, that the aggressors might review their conduct, and its consequences, before a final appeal to war. The wisdom of the measure for these purposes is incontestible ; and it has received most universal approbation.

Secondly—As an act of coercion : by the privation inflicted, to teach aggressors to treat this nation with respect. In this light it is to be considered as a political experiment, not as the forerunner of the annihilation of our trade.

If it proves successful, the afflictions of your commerce will cease, and never be renewed to an alarming extent. Every man will applaud the measure. Its preference to war is incalculable. One gives a temporary check to our prosperity ; the other introduces almost every evil incident to human nature. One can be removed when the nation wills it ; the other continues during the pleasure of a foreign nation. One hazards not the institutions of civil liberty, the other increases the power of government, and lessens the rights of the people.

If it fail, it will be forever abandoned as a means of coercion ; and more efficient measures adopted to maintain our commercial rights.

It is said that our prosperity and happiness ought not to be interrupted to try a political experiment—nor have they been—they were interrupted, and, as far as they depend on foreign concerns, destroyed by foreign powers ; and the experiment was tried to restore them : not at their hazard. Every act of government, every improvement in arts, sciences, and the ordinary pursuits of life ; and every effort to open a new trade, is an experiment. So was the settlement of this country, and so was your confederation, the declaration of independence, and the constitution.

What is the course opposition would have pursued ? Would they consent to pay tribute ? Tribute ! from whom ? America ! ! to whom ? England ? It is impossible ! ! You settled this question when you were colonies, at the edge of the Hessian sabre, and the Indian tomahawk, and the mouth of the British cannon. You were then few, poor, and infantile : without arms, without resources, and without a government. And on what question ?

whether you should pay a tribute of six cents on a pound of tea ; a luxury of foreign growth. It was the principle, not the tax, that roused your passions, called your hidden energies into action, and in view of the astonished world, led you to triumph over the most powerful nation then on earth. And will you now, a numerous, powerful people, with the best government, replete with resources and arms, whenever you wish to sell a cargo of your own products to an European power, pay tribute for permission? If you would not then pay it for a single luxury of Asia, will you now on all the products of America? On your cotton its full value, and one fifth on all other articles.

If you will ! act up to the principles that govern you ; at the loss of your and your country's honor and independence. Save, as much as you can. As England's law stands you have to pay going and returning, double freight and double charges. You convey your products, and the return cargo, to England ; land, and store them ; pay storage, lightage, wharfage and tribute ; and then, and then only, you may reload your vessel and sail for the destined port. You had better petition his Gracious Majesty in tender regard to the ease and happiness of his American subjects, to appoint proper officers at his ports and harbors in these United States, to receive your (not our) contributions ; and to allow you to sail direct to the ports of destination. The saving will be great in money, and greater in feelings ; and his Majesty may grant the request, if his tidewaiters, wharfingers, bakers, victuallers, deputy collectors, tavern and store keepers, alarmed at the loss of their profits, do not object. I absolve the opposition from the most distant thought of such baseness. In conjunction with the republicans they have voted, " That the United States cannot without a sacrifice of their rights, honor and independence, submit to the late edicts of Great Britain and France." What then remains? War or intermediary measures

My principal object is, to convince you beyond a reasonable doubt, that the national government merits general confidence ; that it ever has been, and is attentive to the rights of commerce ; that it is your interest, as well as your duty, to yield it every support ; and that the separation of New England from the other states would to a certainty terminate in the ruin of that part of the nation.

Proceeding to elucidate these points, it will not be useless to consider for a moment the three great interests of agriculture, commerce and manufactures. They are sisters. Agriculture is the parent of wealth, strength, and virtue : without her, commerce cannot exist, and manufactures cannot flourish : without

her, in modern, if not in ancient days, no nation has become great and powerful, except Holland ; and the circumstances which led to her prosperity, have long ceased to exist.

The wealth of the farmer is fixed ; it cannot be removed or destroyed. It is visible ; it is tangible ; it possesses an inherent power of producing wealth ; and it for ever remains a corner stone and pillar of national security. This employment gives health and energy ; he knows no country, other than his own ; and he and the manufacturer are ever at their posts, ready to defend the nation,

The wealth of the merchant, as well as himself, may be here to day, to-morrow in Europe. They may be withdrawn the moment they are the most wanted. This wealth, is fleeting and transitory. It has no country, no home. It seeks all climates ; and for all it has nearly an equal respect ; laboring only for self multiplication. But agriculture flourishes most when commerce is most active ; and the manufacturer thrives better when aided by both, than when deprived of either.

The principal of the four reasons which induced the formation of our constitution, was to give life to commerce, and through it to derive a revenue.

Recur to the period between peace and the present government. Did not the commercial states enrich themselves at the expense of the agricultural ? Did not Maryland affect the vital resources of Virginia ? Did not New York and Massachusetts lay North Carolina, Jersey, Connecticut, and Vermont under contribution ? Did the farmer thrive, or was his visage marked with the smile of content ?

If our commerce be annihilated, will not the period of agricultural discontents and despondency return ?

If it be transferred to a foreign power, will not that power in imitation of the commercial states, enrich herself at this nation's expense ?

The national benefits of our manufactures are apparent ; and political considerations should induce us to foster them. They depend for their success, not less on commerce, than on agriculture. Commerce supplies the manufacturer with capital, with raw materials ; vends his wares and manufactures in different countries, and in different parts of the same country ; and returns to the artist his profit and reward.

That such is the opinion of the manufacturer is evident from his establishing himself, almost universally, within the reach of navigation ; and in the commercial parts of the country, in, or near towns.

The correctness of his opinion is proved by these facts. In

1806, notwithstanding the infancy of our manufactures, our merchants vendcd in foreign countries two millions seven hundred and seven thousand dollars worth of American manufactures, to produce which, eight hundred and eighteen thousand dollars worth of foreign materials were used.

No man of reflection will deny the wisdom of progressively aiding our manufactures, by laws prohibiting the introduction of such articles as our citizens can supply at a reasonable price, or imposing such duties as will give them a decided advantage. Nor will this operate materially to the injury of the merchant—when it takes from him an article of import, it furnishes an article of export to a foreign country, or to a distant part of his own; and the change will be gradual and almost imperceptible. The merchant may turn his capital to a different commercial channel.

But great and sudden changes are dangerous to all governments; and the remark applies with additional force to a republic.

Nothing is more difficult than to force the people of a profession or a section, to abandon a favourite pursuit, and to assume one which they detest, and in which they are not skilled.

It may be possible for a tyrant to effect it, by scourging his nation with a rod of iron. This weapon does not belong to a free government.

I come now to speak of that interest, in which the greatest portion of your prosperity is at stake.—I mean commerce.

In its most extensive sense, it includes the internal traffick, which is carried on between citizens of the same state or nation, or different states, by purchase or exchange; as well as that intercourse which is carried on between different nations and countries by navigation. The former is usually called internal trade, the latter foreign commerce.

The former is calculated by economists, to be from five to twelve times as extensive as the latter; varying its proportion according to the extent of foreign enterprise. This internal trade is assisted by its freedom from taxation, by the activity of foreign commerce, and by occasional bounties granted by states for the culture of particular articles. It ought to be stimulated by public, improved roads, canals, and bridges, and by every thing which facilitates internal intercourse between the sea-board and the country, and different parts of the interior.

Nothing is more certain, than that as you increase the safety of internal transportation, and lessen its expenses, you increase the value of each man's farm—open an additional country to market, extend the amount of your products for foreign com-

merce, and enlarge the means of acquiring the comforts and elegancies of life.—Nor is it less clear that by internal improvements, the national domain might be increased in value, a sum equal to the necessary expenditure ; so that by a judicious and liberal plan, the facilities of intercourse might be furnished to the interior, even without the inconvenience of a temporary advance. When to these considerations is added one of higher importance—the amalgamation of local interests and feelings which these improvements would produce, without injuring the rights of state sovereignties, is it not matter of deep regret, that notwithstanding the repeated attempts of the President to induce an attention to this subject, no one step should have been taken ? What is easier than by a rule which shall do equal justice to each state, to effect these necessary and all important improvements ?

And is it not worthy of serious reflection, that while more than twenty eight millions of dollars, have been advanced to aid foreign commerce, in which five-sixths of the nation have only an indirect and partial benefit, not one cent has been advanced to aid the farming interest directly, although it would indirectly give an equal aid to commerce.

Few men entertain a higher opinion than I do of the value of foreign commerce : it produced before the revolution a great portion of the capital that enabled us to carry through the struggle. It generated that spirit of hardy enterprise, which aided by our nautical skill, severely annoyed the trade of the enemy ; and supplied this nation with many articles of the first necessity. It encouraged that love of liberty, and independence of thought and action, which eminently contributed to our becoming a nation.

It has since given life and spirit to agriculture, raised the value of our lands, and furnished an extensive American capital, equal and indeed superior, to the demands of our whole commerce. A capital which may constitute a fund for the support of the nation in the day of necessity.

Nothing is more unfounded than the suggestion that American commerce is indebted to Europe ; the reverse is the fact, to the amount of many millions. England's pretended balance embraces all the insolvencies and bankruptcies of sixty years ; and British merchants have more of American capital than sufficient to pay British demands.

It has furnished funds for the most of our banks, insurances, turnpikes, bridges, and canals.

To this it has been principally owing that New England has arrived to her present state of improvement and wealth. In

New England it is coeval with her existence. The revolution and constitution both found you highly commercial ; in that character you became parties to both compacts of civil government, and your right to a reasonable support in your favourite pursuit, is as clearly and fully guaranteed, as is to any other class in society, its pursuits and interests.

In further considering the rights of this commerce to the countenance and protection of government, its division into two classes will lead to a more perfect knowledge and more correct decision.

First. The carrying trade.

It is that commerce, where the merchant sends his vessel with a cargo of our products or commercial capital to any foreign port, and brings in return the merchandize of that port, destined for foreign consumption, or in such quantities as exceed the demands of our market ; and after it has been incorporated with the body of our merchandize, it is sent to another foreign port for sale. Often it is extended still further—after leaving our ports, it disposes of its cargo at the port of its first destination ; procures another, sells it at a third, and so on ; till finally it returns home enriched with the commerce of many countries. It always exists in a limited extent ; but its profits are principally derived from a state of warfare among the great nations of Europe.

From it this nation derives the following benefits.

1st. An annual increase of wealth drawn in time of war from foreign countries, equal to from ten to twenty millions of dollars.

2d. A more perfect knowledge of the commerce of the world, from which our merchants are enabled to make more correct calculations in favor of our necessary foreign commerce.

3d. The increase of our navigation ; our seamen and their skill.

4th. A reduction of price, effected by the surplus quantities on hand, of from twenty to forty per cent, on many of the articles for home consumption.

5th. An income to the public coffers, exclusive of the expenditure it occasions, equal in time of war between foreign nations, to about one twelfth of our revenue.—This is a tax actually defrayed by other countries, and is the only revenue that is not eventually paid by the people of this nation.

This trade merits the attention of government, and its services by the appointment of necessary agents, by negotiations, and by an enforcement of the law of nations as far as practicable ; but as the vital interests of no class of citizens, and consequently of

no section, are involved in it, its maintenance is not to be expected at the expense of war.

Secondly. Necessary foreign commerce,

This embraces the export of our products, and the importation of such articles of foreign growth and manufacture as contribute to our necessities, comfort and happiness. This commerce can never be surrendered for any considerable time under any possible circumstances.—It is essential to our prosperity and happiness, and even to our independence. It is fairly guaranteed to the commercial interest, and its annihilation might produce consequences the most disastrous.

To resign this commerce in the present state of the world, would make us vassals to England; this nation excepted, there is not one that can assume the character of neutral. Every man contemplates a speedy return to the accustomed relations in life, at least so far as to enable our farmers to vend their surplus products. If we surrender our right to transport them, who can come here to purchase? England only! In this state of things she would monopolize our products, reduce their amount, and lessen their price.—She would naturally acquire that influence on our politics which could not be controuled, and we should become a second Portugal.

I have heard of a real or imaginary system of China, of a civilized nation supposed to inhibit foreign commerce, and of the recommendation of that system, though not by government to this nation.—On this subject I have enquired, and the result has been, that no such system exists. That nation studiously avoids foreign treaties, yet for a century and an half she has encouraged foreign commerce; and her own citizens in their own ships actually carry on considerable foreign commerce with Japan, Batavia, and other ports of the East Indies. But what of China, admitting she limits the commerce of her subjects to her own provinces? Her empire contains a third or a fourth of the whole human race; a greater number of people than Europe and America combined, and near three fourths of the population of Asia. Her various provinces produce almost every thing in the known world.—Her numbers naturally furnish every order and every occupation in life, and her internal trade must exceed the whole commerce of Europe. Is this nation set before us as an example? Shall a nation whose surplus produce is immense, be assimilated to an overgrown nation whose population on rafts and shallops nearly equals ours, and who scarcely know how to find sustenance? Shall the fancied system of an absolute chief be preferred to the laws of a country preserving the rights and giving scope to the energies of every class in society? Shall that

na utorial people whose canvass whitens every sea, who lead the old world to new sources of commerce, force the scaly tribe to give sustenance to distant nations and countries, and levy tribute on the monsters of the deep, be compared to a people ignorant of astronomy, geometry, and navigation ; whose fears force them to keep near sight of land, and whose superstition leads them to offer incense in times of difficulty in lieu of those exertions on which human safety depends ? Instead of freedom, shall we substitute slavery ? Instead of knowledge, shall we prepare the way for ignorance ? Bold and intrepid navigators ! Your country acknowledges your services, she admires the warmth and tenderness of your friendships, the extent of your liberality, the tear of your sensibility, and your firmness and patience in times of suffering —She will never desert your interests. But when the day is overcast, when the tempest lowers, and the lightnings play, she pauses to decide on the course of the voyage.

It is time to return to the main subject.—Confidence the most durable, as well as the most rational, is derived from a series of wise and useful actions. In the ordinary walks of life we do not readily believe that the agent who for years has served us with zeal, integrity, and ability, has in a particular instance evidenced a want of wisdom, and we listen with more caution to those charges which implicate his integrity. If on a comparison of Mr. Jefferson's administration with those of his predecessors, we find that his efforts have been as useful to his country as theirs, justice and liberality will demand for him your confidence. If they are found to exceed the efforts of others, justice will require you to add to confidence, gratitude.

Let us proceed to the comparison. The facts which will be stated cannot be controverted, and you will decide who has the highest claim to your confidence.

THE THREE ADMINISTRATIONS.

Under the Washington administration.

The national debt was funded, and six per cent interest paid on one third, three per cent on one third, and one third was deferred, and the national bank was established.

The duty on foreign goods was levied.

A duty was laid on salt.

The excise on carriages, snuffs, refined sugar, and domestic distilled spirits was levied.

The Adams administration.

The interest on the six per cent and three per cent was paid, but the deferred drew no interest.

It was continued.

It was continued and an additional duty laid of eight cents per bushel.

It was continued.

The Jefferson administration.

The deferred stock drew an interest of six per cent which has been paid, and also the interest of the three per cent and the old six per cent.

It was continued, and an additional duty laid on the Mediterranean trade to support the Tripolitan war, the products of which are equal to the excise duties which have been repealed.

All taxes on salt were repealed.

All excise taxes were abolished.

and the encouragement were
given to commerce.

aid were continued.

and encouragement were given to
commerce.

There was an embargo.

There was no embargo.

There is an embargo.

The savages were humbled and
peace restored to our frontiers.

The peace of our frontiers was
preserved and a friendly intercourse
with the savages cherished.

The frontiers have been eminently
extended, peace preserved, the most
friendly dispositions cherished, and
the savages induced to make consi-
derable progress towards civilization

B

The northern posts were gained,
and the limits fixed between Spain
and this nation.

No territorial questions arose,
except the line between Maine and
Nova Scotia, which I believe is not
finally settled.

The Island and Territory of New
Orleans and all the Territory of
Louisiana were purchased, whereby
we have acquired the sole right to
the Mississippi and all her tributary
waters. The price given was fif-
teen millions of dollars, of which
three millions and three quarters
of a million have been paid.

Tribute was granted to Algiers

It was paid.

It has also been paid.

Several sums of money were bor-
rowed, nor could it be avoided as
the government was just formed.

An authority was given to loan eight
millions, at 8 per cent, and he actually
loaned five millions, at that interest.

No loan has been made.

Under the Washington administration.

Treaties to aid our commerce were formed with England, Spain, and Algiers. He gained redress for the injuries sustained by our merchants.

The native right to 410,880 acres of the national domain was extinguished.

The Adams administration.

A commercial treaty was formed with Prussia. A treaty allowing tribute to the Barbary powers. A commercial treaty with France, in which our merchants gained no compensation for their losses, and the right to demand redress in future was surrendered. He never gained a cent for indemnity to our merchants.

The native right to 150,000 acres of the national domain was extinguished.

The Jefferson administration.

The Tripolitans have been humbled and forced to sue for peace. No commercial treaty has been formed. The demands of the British under Jay's treaty have by a convention been fixed at six hundred thousand pounds sterling, which have been paid. By the purchase of Louisiana three millions seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars, have been gained of France and paid over to our merchants for those demands which were surrendered under the treaty of 1800.

The native right to 150,061 square miles, which is equal to 99,879,040 acres, of the national domain was extinguished. Thus by this administration has been brought into the stock of national wealth as much as a farm of one hundred acres, for each family of free people in the nation.

The sedition and alien laws were passed.

The sedition law expired when this administration commenced, and the alien law was repealed.

The stamp duty was levied.

The stamp duty was repealed.

The land tax was laid.

The land tax and all the other internal taxes were abolished.

In consequence of the war office being destroyed by fire on the day of the increase of arms and artillery cannot be stated.

Into 4770 stands the number of fire arms have been doubled, and it will be recollected that most of the arms which this administration found in the arsenals, were those which belonged to the revolutionary army.

There have also been added 1368 pieces of artillery.

The average national expense was five millions three hundred and twenty two thousand five hundred and ten dollars and twenty two cents per annum.

The average national expense has been four millions sixty three thousand three hundred and twenty two dollars and fifty seven cents per annum.

Under the Washington administration.

The Adams administration.

The national debt was increased three millions three hundred and ninety four thousand three hundred and seventeen dollars and forty two cents.

This administration left in the Treasury one million seven hundred and ninety four thousand and forty four dollars.

The Jefferson administration

The national debt has been diminished thirty three millions six hundred thousand dollars, of its principal.

There are now in the Treasury sixteen millions of dollars.

This view of the different administrations will convince every unprejudiced mind of the justice of the claim of confidence which I make in behalf of the national government. But I go further, and demand your gratitude. The opposition claim the credit of furnishing the funds for this administration. So far as the internal taxes have contributed, I admit their claim, and yield every advantage they can desire, but they have been answered, and I repeat it, that the right of levying an impost, and the power to regulate commerce, were the most powerful reasons that induced the constitution; and the impost was levied by universal consent, two years before that difference of opinion which produced the present parties.

Neither party can justly claim the credit of the measure, but, if either can, it justly belongs to the republican party, for it was proposed in Congress by the republican President elect, on the eighth day of April 1789. (Debates in Congress, volume first, page 13.)

The purchase of Louisiana has passed the ordeal of severe party censure, yet the history of ancient and modern times, does not record an act of higher political wisdom.

It cost fifteen millions of dollars, of which three millions and three quarters went to the relief of our merchants. The right to collect our present duties for thirty years at the port of New Orleans would sell in market for more than the whole purchase money.

To this is to be added the value of at least 200,000,000 acres of productive, well situated lands; immense public property in the City and Island of New Orleans; inexhaustible supplies of lead and other precious metals; the revenues collected at Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New York on goods sent over the mountains or by the northern waters, to the people of these countries for consumption, and all the future benefits of that internal trade, which is now deserving attention, and will become of more importance to our merchants, than the whole foreign commerce of the small kingdoms in Europe.

In a political view the advantages derived from this purchase transcend the conceptions of the boldest calculator.

It has excluded the intrigues of Europe from our western frontier; and secured the people of West Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, West Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana and Mississippi, in a free and uninterrupted passage to and from the ocean, which was essential to their existence.—It has bridled the savages of the west, and deprived them of the aids without which they cannot maintain war with this nation. It has prevented our citizens from migrating to a foreign power, in numbers not

less than thirty thousand annually, and saved us from all the evils of a foreign nation on our western frontier.

Next to seas, impassible mountains and impenetrable marshes are the best boundaries between nations. None can be worse than navigable rivers, where the citizens of different nations encounter daily, and almost unavoidable collision. Is there a man who wishes that Bonaparte held Louisiana, or New Orleans, and that he should settle his disbanded veterans on the banks of the Mississippi?

If the country west of that river be too remote and extensive to remain always under, or a member of this nation, the inhabitants some centuries hence will withdraw and set up for themselves, as a son bids adieu to the house of his father, and establishes for himself a family; and like the son, they will carry with them our principles, our love of liberty, our habits and manners, an affectionate recollection of past scenes and an attachment to this nation only.

Finally, it has relieved all our citizens west of the Alleghany from being taxed by a foreign power in their neighbourhood, and secured to our merchants the freight of that extensive country and a profit on its products. A freight which in thirty years will require as much tonnage as is now owned in this nation. This country can never come in competition with any interests in New England, but it comes into a direct competition with all the states south of the Delaware, and particularly those south of the Potowmack; and the planters and farmers of those states, as well as the states themselves, may feel the effects of this competition and rivalry. To New England it will be a mine of wealth—would to God that our other frontier was as well secured, and much I fear that before that event happens, this nation will not enjoy, at one time, any considerable period of tranquillity and happiness.

This purchase forms one ground on which I contend that the republican administration has paid superior attention to commerce; and however it may be thought at this day, the period is not remote when our merchants will acknowledge that they owe, a quarter or a third of their prosperity to this act. Other evidences in support of my claim, will be developed in the sequel.

The government is charged with artfully shaping the course of national affairs, so as to undermine commerce. The leading republicans are charged with an insidious design to overturn it and introduce the fancied system of China; and the southern and western people are charged generally with a hatred to commerce. Sorry I am to say that these charges have taken deep

root in the minds of many of you, who I know to be honest, and who will never surrender the rights of civil liberty. It shall be my endeavour to remove this belief, and to show you by proofs irresistible, that the charges are unfounded, or at least not supported by a single fact.

Before a whole section will be agitated, before a political revolution will be effected, before the happiness, independence, and honor of our country will be offered on the altar of any foreign despot, and before the hardy sons of New England will tarnish their laurels, and become the despoilers of their own happiness, they ought to require some clear proof of the fact, from a source, pure and unsuspected. They ought not to rely on the harangues of electioneering cabals, nor the effusions of pensioned printers. The proof belongs to the assailants, yet it will not be produced; and ought not the inference to be, that it does not exist? The only evidence ever offered is,

1st. Occasional remarks in Congress and elsewhere injurious to commerce.

2nd. The President's recommendation to remove the discriminating duties.

3d. The embargo.

As to the first, that they have existed is too true. They have arisen from the irritations produced by the remarks of your friends, from a want of that knowledge of the intimate connection between the great interests of the nation, which all public men ought to possess, and from the heated imaginations of theorists.

But in deciding this point, you will judge from the acts of your government, and not from these individual effusions. For government, can no more be answerable for them than you can for those denunciations against government; those threats of rebellion and separation which manifest a hatred to a part of the nation, and destroy the hard earned fame of New England.

It is not true that the western and southern states have a hatred to commerce, the term ought at least to be softened down to aversion; and in my belief the difference of character arises solely from the difference of condition and situation.

But I will admit the charge in its highest latitude. What follows? Shall we establish a separate government? By no means! This imaginary evil which produces collisions of opinion, is the very basis of your wealth and happiness. You have to choose between opinions occasionally offered against your interest, and expressions offensive to you as men, and the reduction of your commercial importance and your personal prosperity—Man follows the employment most congenial to his feelings and he

naturally supports what he follows. You must either enjoy all the benefits of your commerce, with these personal and hostile effusions, or you must induce the people of these sections to acquire a fondness for it, in which case they will not only speak of it with an affectionate regard, but they will become your competitors and rivals. Do you wish to sacrifice this important interest to a smile or a bow? Do you wish to encourage that sentiment which yields you more personal respect at the loss of your wealth and happiness? These people have the products to export, the bottoms to grow the hemp, the forests to furnish the timber, and every other thing to contribute to the establishment of an extensive commerce. If you think that your capital, or your superior nautical skill will overpower them you deceive yourselves. They know that your capital, from ideal, has become solid in less than twenty years; and the energies of their minds, and the perseverance of their labors, will not be inferior to yours, if you once enkindle this passion in their bosoms.

Their aversion to commerce is our palladium, and their effusions of a splenetic cast, are but a small tribute to which we submit for our enjoyments. Let us go on quietly, yield support to the government, cultivate the best understanding with every part of the nation, spread our capital through the western forests, select there every place for a ship yard, inspire their people with confidence, and with a knowledge of the benefits of our intercourse, improve our schools, send annually into the nation, fifty thousand well informed active citizens, and extend the facilities of transacting business into every corner of New England; and although from our geographical position, our direct influence must be small, our indirect influence will give us our just weight in the nation. You ought not to forget that direct influence is solely charged with the duty of making the nation happy, while indirect influence enjoys every national benefit without any responsibility.

2d. The recommendation of the executive to remove the discriminating duties. For the purpose of settling the point in discussion, it is immaterial whether the removal of this discrimination would have injured or benefited commerce. It is due to the President, however, to remark, that by many eminent merchants it was thought to be useful. But certain it is that the motion of the discrimination, was, by the executive, designed to aid our merchants; and when they were known to be generally averse to it, the measure was abandoned without even a discussion in Congress. This abandonment proves a respectful attention to their opinions, as well as a regard to their interests and feelings.

3d. The embargo. The causes which led to this measure have already been developed. The manner in which it was laid, and its extension to our products, our commerce, and our manufactures, as well as to our shipping, clearly demonstrated that its design was to produce a national benefit, not to injure the commercial or any other interest. Had it been limited to our shipping, my mind would have told me to bid adieu to national tranquillity and happiness.

You have been told that your sufferings are superior to those of the other parts of the nation.

The public acts of the different states, constitute the best evidence of the extent of the evils experienced in the present state of the country. Evils, which you will constantly bear in mind, derive their origin from the lawless tyranny of foreign powers.

In all the agricultural states the collection of debts has been suspended, by direct law, by delay, replevin, or by a refusal of the courts to render judgment; or bills are now pending before their legislatures for this purpose. You well know the evils which flow from a suspension of justice.—You know that it will take years to restore private confidence, and that every consumer or purchaser on credit, in the mean time must give an increased price, equal to an insurance against a similar evil. Would these measures be adopted under less evils than you have experienced? With you the course of justice has not been impeded, nor is it contemplated. Yet neither the bell of the auctioneer, nor the drum of the sheriff, have called you to witness the sacrifice of a citizen's property; nor are your jails crowded with the unfortunate.

It is said that an embargo as a measure of coercion is too ridiculous to allow you to believe in the integrity of those who maintain it. I do not pledge myself for the success of the experiment; nor can my opinion be of any importance. But its efficiency is believed by many of our most enlightened and virtuous citizens: and the belief originated with the federalists.

On the 22d of June, 1789, Colonel Wadsworth, of Connecticut, an eminent merchant and a distinguished federalist, declared in Congress, while speaking of the means of forcing Great Britain to render justice to our commerce, that "his first object would be to interdict the trade which supplied the British dependencies with the necessaries of life. He was bold to say that Nova Scotia, the settlement founded by Britain, to rival the United States, could not exist without such aid: her West India settlements would also feel the want of our commerce, the whole body of her colonies would be clamor-

ous to regain the advantages thus suspended, and compel the mother country to adopt measures for their and our mutual convenience and interest : this he apprehended would be good policy and every how warrantable." (Debates, Vol. 2, p. 9 17 & 18.)

On the 12th of March, 1794, Judge Sedgwick, whose character you all know, offered in Congress, resolutions to raise 15,000 men, and to empower the President to lay an embargo. These grew out of the injuries offered by Great Britain. In his speech on this occasion, he remarked, "The reasons on which this idea of an embargo are founded, were that Great Britain cannot supply her West Indies, except from the United States; if this is in any degree true in peaceable times, how much more forcibly must it operate now. They have a considerable military force there to feed; in truth, without supplies from this country they must inevitably abandon a project, with them a favourite one, the conquest of the French West Indies—in this situation of affairs he believed it would be found proper to put into the hands of the President a power to lay this embargo, and in a moment to prevent all supplies going to the West Indies." With these views, as well as to secure our commerce from spoils, President Washington laid an embargo. You will now decide whether to maintain this opinion is an evidence of insincerity and of a want of integrity.

I deny the charge that government has artfully shaped the course of national affairs. It has laboured assiduously, and with no mean talent, to preserve and increase the general prosperity, and to advance every interest in the nation. When the present party came into power, they found the people shackled with the very laws and taxes which would be essential for their support in case of interdicting foreign commerce—an alien law to send off foreign merchants—a sedition law to awe our merchants and others into silence; and three classes of internal taxes, with every necessary officer to enforce them. If they had contemplated the destruction of foreign commerce, they would not have repealed these laws, all the odium of these measures belonged to the preceding administration.

The difference between *creating* and *continuing* a tax is too apparent to escape the most superficial politician; and the idea of levying the necessary revenue on importations, when our foreign commerce is annihilated, is too contemptible to be entertained by a parish constable.

The act of government in repealing all internal taxes, and relying solely for revenue on our foreign commerce furnishes the

highest evidence possible of their determination to grant to that commerce every aid and support in their power.

The embargo must necessarily be temporary ; it cannot endure for any considerable period ; and government will seize upon the first favourable moment to produce a change of measures. Do you believe the farming interest design to raise their produce to perish ? Do the states contemplate destroying the basis of private confidence, by preventing for any considerable time the regular course of justice ? Do they devise the ruin of the middle and lower classes, by an accumulation of interest ? Do the government design to operate without revenue or to procure it solely by loans ; Do they expect that the people will come willingly and put on the livery of slaves by renewing the excises which they lately tore from them so indignantly ? Or is your executive prepared, in imitation of good king Codrus, to put spurs to the horse of state, and leap into the gulph ?

If the principles of our nature teach us to regard and foster our own interests, and the interests of those who are nearest and dearest to us, if we have a right to infer from the situation of men what objects engross their highest solicitude and most vigilant attention—then I may say that there are a greater number of distinguished citizens, now in power, who entertain all the mercantile sympathies and feel the deepest interest in our commercial prosperity, than have at any other time belonged to the government.

The venerable Clinton resides in the first commercial city in the nation ; his real estate in that city constitutes a principal part of his wealth ; and the value of that property depends principally on the activity and success of commerce.

The Secretary of War has for years been interested in navigation ; most of his connexions and friends have depended upon it for support ; and he mourns the loss of a beloved son, who was in the carrying trade.

The Secretary of the Navy is the son of a distinguished merchant ; his father-in-law, his brother, and all his kindred are now merchants ; no family in America is, or has been in more extensive commerce ; and a considerable part of his income is derived from insurance stock.

Can these gentlemen hate commerce ? Or will they support measures designed to effect its ruin ? No man can show me an equal portion of commercial feeling in any former administration.

¶ The duties of the Secretary of the Treasury naturally lead him to cherish this interest ; unless he prefers the odium of devising new and inconvenient taxes to the facilities of deriving our

revenues in the present manner—unless he wishes to exchange fame for the execration of this people.

But I am prepared to answer the natural reply of the bigoted partizan. “It is not against these men that I level my denunciation.—It is against your President and his successor.” Patience sir! You shall have an answer, and such an one, that if you regard truth, shall seal your lips in silence. If the strength of your prejudices will not allow you to acknowledge its sufficiency, the exercise of your discretion will induce you not to combat it. It shall not be a gasconade of words, or sentences artfully combined to decoy your judgment by the sweetness of their cadence, or the smoothness of their periods. The subject does not require this nor do these powers belong to me. I cannot adorn any subject with the flowers of oratory, nor dress it in the attire of literary eloquence. It shall be plain truth in a home spun dress—but not the worse for that.

I ask the opposition for the evidence of Mr. Jefferson’s dislike to commerce. Is it found in his messages, in his Notes on Virginia, in his conduct as a foreign minister, as Secretary of State, as Vice-President, or President? No! In every instance where that subject has come before him, it is treated in a manner which bespeaks a high regard for its protection and prosperity, and deep science in the mystery.

It was he who opened the markets of France to our fishermen

It was he who laid the foundation, to extend our commerce up the Mediterranean,

It was he who nobly and ably maintained the modern law of nations—that free ships make free goods, and never yielded the point, till, in the opinion of Washington, founded on the state of the nation, it had become necessary.

It was he who always maintained the rights of our seamen, and resisted the right of search and impressment, as injurious to our citizens, and derogatory to our flag.

It was he, who in his correspondence with the British and French ministers, vindicated our rights of commerce, in a manner which excited the admiration of Europe, and forced applause from his opponents.

It was he, who, with others on the 30th of April, 1784, reported to Congress a resolution, requiring the states to enable Congress to limit the transportation of American products to American bottoms for fifteen years.

It is he, who now maintains, as he ever has, that the interests of this nation require a navigation act, which shall limit the exportation of American products to American bottoms; and not as his enemies unjustly charge, to confine it to foreign bottoms.

An act which the state of this nation, with some exceptions and provisions, imperiously demands.

It was he, who in 1793, with other distinguished republicans of the south, offered to two mercantile members from New England, to aid, with their whole influence, the passage of such navigation act. This fact is now susceptible of proof.

It was he, on whom, by the activity of Mr. Goodhue, of Massachusetts, was devolved the duty of making a general report on our commerce, and suggesting the mode by which it could be secured and increased. An activity founded on the belief that his views were more liberal and less tinctured with preferences than those of another secretary.

It was he, who reported to Congress, on this subject, on the 16th day of December, 1793. This report furnishes of itself, conclusive proof of his regard for commerce, and of his opinion, that the highest interests of this nation require that it should be maintained, cherished, and protected.

In it he says, "our commerce is certainly of a character to entitle it to favour in most countries. The commodities we offer are either necessities of life, or materials for manufacture, or convenient subjects of revenue : and we take in exchange, either manufactures, when they have received the last finish of art and industry, or mere luxuries"—"Free commerce and navigation are not to be given in exchange for restrictions or vexations : nor are they likely to produce a relaxation of them."

"Our navigation involves still higher considerations. As a branch of industry it is valuable : but as a resource of defence ESSENTIAL."

"Its value as a branch of industry is enhanced by the dependence of so many branches on it. In times of general peace it multiplies competitors for employment in transportation, and so keeps that at its proper level ; and in times of war, that is to say, when those nations who may be our principal carriers, shall be at war with each other, if we have not within ourselves the means of transportation, our produce must be exposed in beligerent vessels, at the increased expense of war freight, and insurance, and the articles which will not bear that, must perish on our hands."

"But it is as a resource for defence, that our navigation will admit neither neglect nor forbearance. The position and circumstances of the United States, leave them nothing to fear on their land-board, and nothing to desire beyond their present rights. But on their sea-board, they are open to injury, and they have there too a commerce which must be protected. This can only be done

by possessing a respectable body of citizen-seamen, and of artists and establishments in readiness for ship building."

"If particular nations grasp at undue shares, (of commerce) and more especially, if they seize on the means of the United States, *to convert them into alimnt for their own strength, and withdraw them entirely from the support of those to whom they belong,* defensive and protecting measures become necessary on the part of the nation whose marine resources are thus invaded, or it will be disarmed of its defence : *its productions will lie at the mercy of the nation which has possessed itself exclusively of the means of carrying them, and its politics may be influenced by those who command its commerce.* The carriage of our own commodities, if once established in another channel, cannot be resumed the moment we desire. If we lose the seamen and artists whom it now occupies, we lose the present means of marine defence, and time will be requisite to raise up others, *when disgraces or losses shall bring home to our feelings the error of having abandoned them.* The materials for maintaining our due share of navigation, are ours in abundance." (Pages 15, 16, 17.)

He then proceeds to recommend discriminating duties, and a navigation act which shall secure to our citizens, against each nation, the same rights of navigation as each nation secures to her subjects ; and speaking of the restrictions of Great Britain on our commerce, he says, they have effected a loss "to us of near forty thousand tons of shipping." "This involves a proportionate loss of seamen, ship-wrights, and ship-building, and is too serious a loss to admit forbearance of some effectual remedy.

Once more—

It was he, who, as will be proved before this address is closed, has been more liberal in his expenditure in aid of commerce than any other Executive.

I have purposely avoided referring to those interesting and enlightened discussions which of late have taken place, in vindication of our commercial rights ; because they must be in the recollection of all. The same reason renders it unnecessary for me to press upon your consideration this fact, that it is the injury to our foreign commerce which at this moment excites principally the feelings of this nation, and that the determination to aid it produces in a degree her present sufferings. Though it ought to be remarked, that while every act of government evidences a determination to support this important interest, at least it is doubtful whether the mercantile section is right in claiming to direct the mode.

It only remains for me to shew, that every act of Mr. Madi-

son, the President elect, tends to prove in him a devotion to the reasonable support of the commercial interest.

On a critical examination of the proceedings of our government, from its commencement to the present day, truth enables me to aver, that instead of an aversion to, his every action has shown an uncommon regard for it; and that the efforts of no one of its champions have exceeded his, or evidenced a warmer disposition in its favor.

I will trace him from the time he entered the Virginia convention.

In that he remarked, June 11th, 1788; "We should not be surprised in a short time to consider ourselves as a neutral nation—France on the one side, and Great Britain on the other. What is the situation of America? She is remote from Europe, and ought not to engage in her politics or wars. The American vessels, if they can do it with advantage, may carry on the commerce of the contending nations. *It is a source of wealth which we ought not to deny to our citizens.* If it be known that our government can command the whole resources of the nation, we shall be suffered to enjoy *the great advantages of carrying on the commerce of the nations at war*; for none of them would be willing to add us to the number of their enemies." (Deb. in Va. Con. 181 & 182.)

Again, June 13th, 1788. "If interest sir, should continue to operate on them, (the eastern states) I humbly conceive, that they will derive more advantage from holding the Mississippi, than even the southern states. *For if the carrying business be their natural province*, how can it be so much extended and advanced, as by giving the encouragement to agriculture, in the western country, and having the emolument of carrying their produce to market? The carrying trade must depend on agriculture for its support, in a great measure. In what place is agriculture so capable of improvement and great extension as in the western country?' (page 246.)

We next find him a member of the first Congress. On the eighth of April, 1789, he moved the discriminating duties in favor of American tonnage and commerce. (Deb. in Con. Vol. 1, p 13.)

On the 9th of the same month, he remarked, "the states that are most advanced in population, and ripe for manufactures, ought to have *their particular interest attended to* in some degree; while these states retained the power of making *regulations of trade*, they had the power to cherish and protect such institutions—by adopting the present constitution, they have thrown the exercise of this power into other hands—they must

have done this with an expectation that *those interests* would not be neglected here." (Page 24.) The New England states are not mentioned, but here is a clear reference to their *rights and interests*.

Page 26.—"If America was to leave her ports perfectly free and make no *discrimination* between vessels owned by her citizens and those owned by foreigners, while other nations make this discrimination, it is obvious that such policy would go to exclude American shipping altogether from foreign ports, and *she would be materially affected in one of her most important interests* : to this we may add another consideration, that by *encouraging the means of transporting our productions with facility, we encourage the raising them* : and this object, I apprehend, is likely to be kept in view by the general government."

April 15th, page 71.—He expressed an opinion against a duty on hemp and cordage, because it might discourage navigation, "*an object worthy of legislative attention.*" These ideas were enforced. (Page 79.)

He says, pages 116 and 117, "I am a friend to commerce, and at the same time a friend to such regulations as are calculated to promote our own interest on national principles." "Trade then being restrained to an artificial channel, is not so advantageous to America as a direct intercourse would be, it becomes therefore the *duty* of those, to whose care the public interest and welfare are committed, to turn the tide to a more favourable direction."

Speaking of the discriminating duties, pages 183 and 184, he says, "this sir I consider a sacrifice of interest to policy, the sacrifice is but small, but I should not contend for it, if we did (not) stand in need of maritime improvements : was it not for the necessity we are under of having some commercial strength, I should be an advocate for throwing wide open the doors of our commerce to all the world, and making *no kind of discrimination in favor of our own citizens*. But we have maritime dangers to guard against, and we can be secured from them *in no other way than by having a navy and seamen of our own, these can only be obtained by giving a preference.*"

Again, page 210.—"At present it (the transportation of our products) is almost exclusively in the hands of British merchants, and as long as their vessels are upon an equality with ours, they will naturally be inclined to give a preference to their own ; but I *hope soon to see this matter rectified*, and the citizens of one state enabled to assist those of another, and receive mutual benefits and advantages."

He aided in the passage of the bill to encourage your fisheries, February 9, 1792.

On the 3d of January, 1794, he moved a number of resolutions, among others, one to increase the duties on the manufactures and trade of the nations who harrassed our commerce—another to increase the duty on their foreign tonnage ; and the last was in these words, “ *Resolved*, That provision ought to be made for liquidating and ascertaining the losses sustained by citizens of the United States, from the operation of particular regulations of any country contravening the law of nations, and that such losses be reimbursed in the first instance out of the additional duties on the manufactures, productions and vessels of the nation establishing such unlawful regulations.” In his speech he remarked that “ *the nation is bound by the most sacred obligation, he conceived, to protect the rights of its citizens against the violation of them from any quarter ; or if they cannot protect, they are bound to defray the damage.*”—“ *We are bound to obtain reparation for the injustice, or compensate the damage.*”

January 14.—Again he maintained that the necessity of attending to the commercial interest was acknowledged as early as our existence as a nation, and that our existing establishment arose from experience, and it had been the firm belief of the people that such regulations would be made ; and that “if we choose to adopt the principle of excluding other nations from our foreign trade, in order to increase our maritime strength, the nation might secure the carriage of our exports, leaving to other nations the carriage of theirs.”

Finally, debating on Jay’s treaty, April 9, 1795, he expressed himself as follows : “ When government came into operation it is well known that the American tonnage employed in the British trade, bore the most inconsiderable proportion to the British tonnage—our laws have made several regulations in favor of our own shipping, among which was the important encouragement, resulting from the difference of ten per cent in the duties paid by the American and foreign vessels. Under this encouragement, the American tonnage has increased to a very respectable proportion to the British tonnage. If a nation choose, they may prohibit all trade between a colony and a foreign country, as they may between any other part of their dominions and a foreign country. But if they permit such trade at all, it must be free to vessels on both sides, as well in the case of the colonies, as of any other parts of their dominions.

Soon after this he retired from Congress, and had no further opportunity to express his opinions on this interesting subject until he became Secretary of State. In which character he has proved himself deeply skilled in its principle, and firm in the determination to support its rights. While he is charged with

seeking its ruin, it will not be forgotten, that he alone of all its advocates, after a most laborious research, has submitted to his country and the world, its vindication, a lucid developement of its rights, and a conclusive refutation of the claims of the belligerents.

I might here close the vindication of the administration, and the republican party ; but the times are critical, and it is a duty to remove every plausible pretext of the opposition : to place the efforts of the republicans on that high ground to which they are entitled, and which they are certain to occupy, when the passions of the moment have subsided.

I have admitted that the commercial interests are entitled to protection, and I go further and say it is a sacred duty to yield them every reasonable support.

The questions then are, 1st. What is a reasonable support? 2d. Has it been extended to them? This admission precludes the idea of their being entitled to pre-eminent consideration. They constitute about one sixth part of our free population, including the various classes of citizens who are necessarily attached to, and dependent on them, for their sustenance. They add much to our wealth, industry, energy, and information ; but they do not increase our virtue, or our unity of sentiment, and they are injurious to the increase of our natural population.

It is impossible to prescribe any precise rule by which to ascertain the portion of governmental attention to which they have a just claim. It therefore only remains to give a view of the aids and advantages they have derived from government.

They have been fostered and aided by the following measures :

- 1st. An indirect bounty on the fisheries.
- 2d. A discriminating duty of ten per cent in favor of their tonnage.
- 3d. A drawback of the duties allowed on the exportation of imported merchandize.
- 4th. Preventing, either by force or tribute, the Barbary powers from annoying our commerce.
- 5th. Procuring redress for unjust captures, seizures, and condemnations.
- 6th. The extension of our commerce to countries not in our controul, either by commercial treaties or by gaining a dominion of the country.

On all these points, the republicans have rendered as much service to the commercial interests as the federalists ; and the

merchants are indebted to them for the discriminating duties, and for the whole commerce of the Mississippi And—

7thly. The expenses of foreign ministers, agents, consuls, &c. &c. the navy establishment, relief to seamen, light houses, &c. &c.

This class of the aids and assistance afforded our merchants shall receive a full developement.

By a critical examination of the laws of the United States it will appear (as I have found) that exclusive of three or four acts of appropriation, passed to defray the expense of calling out the militia, that were not touched, as the militia were not called into service, there have been appropriated for the civil list, the payment of pensions, the fortifications of ports and harbors the commercial interest, and the war and navy departments, the sum of sixty nine millions four hundred and sixty thousand six hundred and eighty one dollars and eighty three cents, under the administrations of Washington, Adams and Jefferson. Of this sum, there have been paid for the navy department, the navy, naval armaments, light houses, beacons, buoys, &c. for foreign intercourse, commissioners to liquidate commercial claims, commercial agents, relief of seamen, and as tribute, and to humble the pirates of Africa—all of which expenditures, except four questions of foreign intercourse, which related to territorial concerns, were for the relief and benefit of commerce, the sum of twenty eight millions forty four thousand seven hundred and seventy seven dollars and ninety nine cents. Leaving the sum of forty one millions four hundred and fifteen thousand nine hundred and three dollars and eighty four cents, for all the other expenses of government, except some small sums for Indian treaties, and occasional grants for former claims, the payment of the interest and principal of the national debt, and the purchase of Louisiana.

Is there a reasonable man who will say that this expenditure of more than twenty eight millions of dollars, for the support of a class in society, embracing not more than one sixth of our free population, does not evidence a liberal attention to the commercial interest?

But government have not stopped here. There have been expended out of the forty one millions four hundred and fifteen thousand nine hundred and three dollars and eighty four cents, two millions one hundred and eighty three thousand six hundred and fifty four dollars, to fortify our ports and harbours. These fortifications were never designed to prevent the entering of an army into our territories—their only use is to prevent a fleet from appearing before our commercial towns, and laying

our merchants under contribution. This sum ought therefore to be added to the expenditure in favour of the commercial interest, and it increases the charge against that interest to thirty millions two hundred and twenty eight thousand four hundred and thirty one dollars and ninety nine cents, and reduces the general expenditure to thirty nine millions two hundred and thirty two thousand two hundred and forty nine dollars and eighty four cents. Here another consideration presses upon the mind. The commercial interest, in common with all the other interests in society, has in all cases received an equal, and in some a superior advantage from the general expenditure; while the other interests have received no direct benefit from the expenditure in favor of that interest; though they have doubtless derived many and great advantages from the prosperity of our commerce. It is just then to add to the direct expenditure in aid of the commercial interest, one sixth of the general expenditure. The result is, there have been expended for the commercial interest, which comprises one sixth of our free population, thirty six millions seven hundred and sixty seven thousand one hundred and forty dollars and twenty nine cents, and for the residue, being five sixths of the nation, thirty two millions six hundred and thirty nine thousand five hundred and forty one dollars and fifty four cents. Surely the people of New England will not require higher evidence of the attention of government to their interest!

There are those who will be astonished at this view, among whom many may be found inclining to the belief that government has bestowed an undue proportion of its attention and revenue on commerce. Of this number I am not one—the policy has been useful, liberal, and dignified, and in my opinion will be continued.

But the opposition tell us that commerce was fostered by Washington and Adams, and that it has been neglected and even strangled by the republican administration.

It is possible that their passions in this, as in most other cases, may have led them into error. It is possible they might have been more useful to their country, if they had devoted more of their time to obtain a knowledge of national proceedings, and less in fulminating denunciations.

A comparison of the expenditures under each of the administrations, will conclusively settle this question. It will shew which of the administrations has bestowed most attention to this interest.

Pursuing the classification of the expenditures before mentioned, it will, on an examination of our laws, be found that dur-

ing the administration of Washington there were expended in aid of commerce and naval equipments the sum of three millions five hundred and thirty eight thousand one hundred and thirteen dollars and twelve cents, and under the head denominated general expenditure, twelve millions seventy seven thousand nine hundred and forty six dollars and eighty two cents.—In Mr. Adams' administration, for navy and commerce nine millions eighty one thousand seven hundred and twenty five dollars and eighty two cents, for general expenditure twelve millions two hundred and eight thousand three hundred and fifteen dollars and forty six cents.—While under Mr. Jefferson's administration there have been expended for navy and commerce fifteen millions four hundred and twenty four thousand nine hundred and thirty nine dollars and five cents, and for general expenditure seventeen millions one hundred and twenty nine thousand six hundred and forty one dollars and forty six cents.

It results from this investigation, and the opposition are invited to point to an error of importance, that out of every thousand dollars of public expenditure, there were paid out for navy and commerce, under the administration

Of Mr. Washington,	\$ 226
Of Mr. Adams,	426
Of Mr. Jefferson,	473

To this may be added that of the two millions one hundred and eighty three thousand six hundred and fifty four dollars, expended to fortify our ports and harbors, one million four hundred and fourteen thousand one hundred and twenty nine dollars, have been appropriated and expended under the Jefferson administration.

The attention to commerce in the Jefferson, has exceeded what was bestowed by the Adams, and more than doubled what it received in the Washington administration.

It may be objected that the gun-boat system is not in aid of the commercial interest. I answer, it commenced with the Mediterranean war, and was introduced to humble the Tripolitans. It has been increased for the double purpose of driving from our coasts and harbors those licensed piccaroons, who have been principally instrumental in harassing and plundering our commerce, and to protect our ports and harbors. But, if the appropriations which have been made for gun-boats since the attack on the Chesapeake, and an effort to fortify our ports and harbors, should be taken from the list of commercial, and added to the list of fortifying, or of general expenditure, then under the administration of Mr. Jefferson, of every thousand dollars expended, four hundred and forty eight have been for the navy and commerce.

Yet we are told that the republicans are hostile to commerce, and that this hostility is so great, that rebellion by the commercial section has become a virtue. We are invited to raise the standard of revolt; to demolish the only republic on earth; to imbrue our hands in the blood of our brethren; and at the hazard of our own and our prosperity's happiness, to destroy that administration which has contributed most to make us happy, and with it, the union. It has been my study to avoid giving cause of offence, and to place the subjects which have been discussed, in their true light. This proves not only what has been done, but what we have a right to expect; and much indeed shall I be disappointed, if the expectations be not realised.

There are other views of state and of national politics which merit consideration; but at the moment they might not be interesting, and they would swell this address to an inconvenient size.

I have reached my last point, and I approach it with all that fear and trembling that a subject so deeply interesting naturally inspires. The reflection that "this asylum of oppressed humanity," may be torn and rent asunder by civil conflict, chills my veins, and benumbs my faculties. When I recollect the threats of division and dismemberment which are loudly proclaimed and reflect on the state of this nation and on your geographical position, I am almost in amazement. When in my mind, I attempt to assign causes for effects so extraordinary, they appear to bear no proportion. What are the evils under which you labor? It is not that you suffer actual privations. It is not that the hard hand of necessity forces you to over-leap all the rules of rational calculation, to obtain immediate sustenance.—It is only a temporary, necessary stagnation of prosperity, that injures you with your brethren.

Will you for this destroy that liberty which, in an eminent degree, was derived from your efforts? It was you who invited the genius of liberty to come and dwell in this nation. It was you, who in her infancy, guarded her from danger, rocked her in your cradle, and nourished her with your blood.

I will not describe the horrors of a civil war, where brother meets brother in battle—where the father whets his sword to destroy his last hope, or the son dries the fountain of that blood from which he derived his existence; nor attempt to picture those tragic events through which we must pass before this nation will be dismembered, or those wars which must afterwards ensue. But I will describe, and justly too, the political effects which will follow such dismemberment.

Beware how you trifle with your own, or the nation's happiness. Beware lest impassioned partizans lead you to crimes,

and meanly forsake you in the hour of suffering, and humiliation.

Your states, your corporations, and your citizens own between eleven and twelve millions of the funded debt, about one fifth of the whole, and nearly half of what is owned in America ; if you separate, this will be forever lost. You also own one half of all the stock in the national bank, which stands to the credit of the citizens of this nation—this too will be lost. You are now a member of a great nation, capable, when replete with population, of calling as many energies into exercise, as all Europe. If you separate you will become a small nation, with a power to the north and the north east, which in thirty years will be your superior, and one to the west and south west which now possesses three times your strength. You are now, as a member of the nation, proprietors of more fertile land, west of the Alleghany, than all New England, which will furnish farms for your posterity for a century ; you will then have to furnish a foreign nation every forty years, with as much physical strength and active labor as you now possess. You now have nearly a whole continent to assist in defending your rights ; you will then have to defend them for yourselves against a great part of that continent and all the rest of the world. You have now to bear only a small proportion of the expenses of a government ; you will then have a civil government of your own to support, and, as you are a commercial people, there will attach to you all the expenses of maritime defence and foreign relations. You now have the trade of the whole nation secured to you—the products of the Atlantic states, and of the regions of the Mississippi and her tributary waters. A trade which will increase faster than your means to embrace it ; which will stand unrivalled, and find no parallel in the scope of nature ; you will then in your commerce be limited to a small sphere, with few resources, with few products to export, and be left to scramble in the commercial world for a mean and precarious existence. Do not plume yourselves with the belief, that under a separation you will be the carriers for North America. If you separate, a deadly hostility will exist between you and the other states, and so far as they may want foreign tonnage, which will not continue for many years, they will from motives of policy, give encouragement to those who are most remote, and you will be wholly excluded from their commerce. Do not believe that you can from a lasting connexion with England ; she will soothe and caress you for the moment, but by her you will soon be deserted. It is *your* interests and *your* pursuits that excite her hatred, and not the flour and tobacco of the middle, nor the cotton, rice, and indigo, of

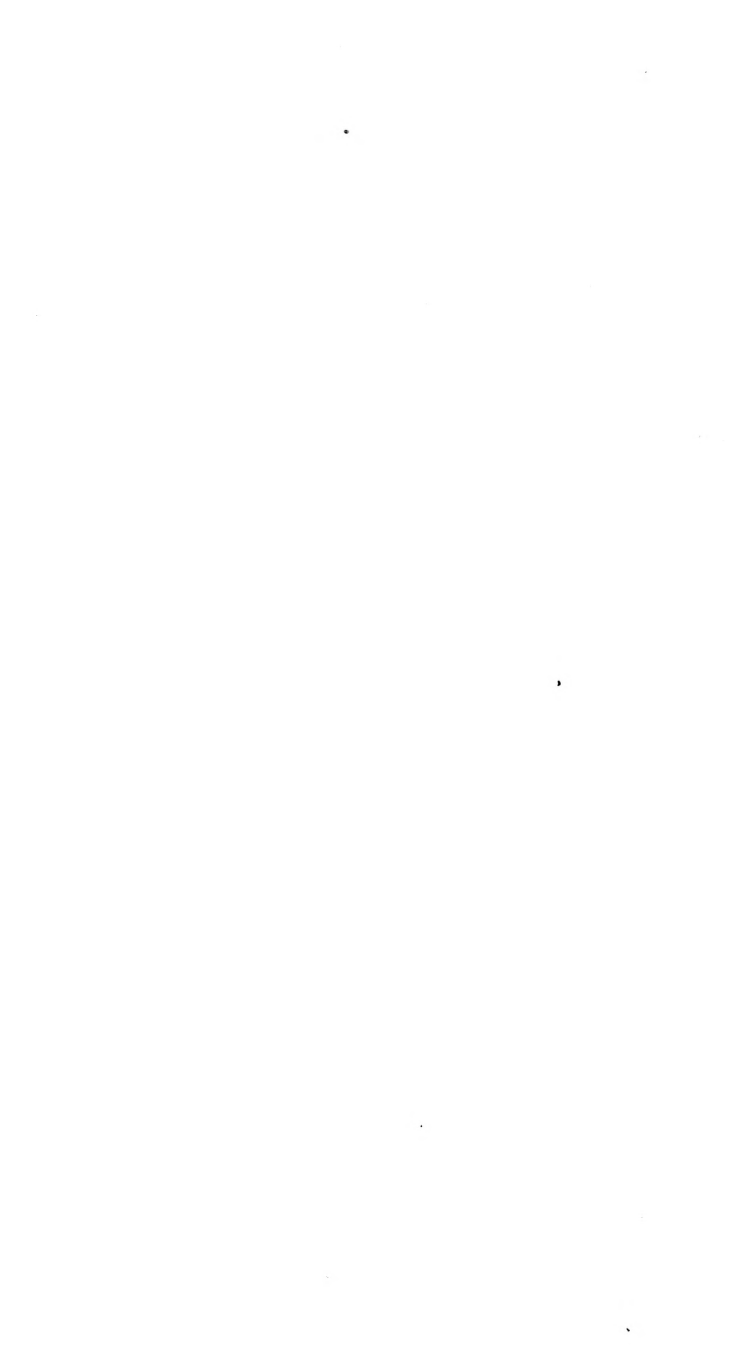
the southern states; and the moment you are separated from them, she has every reason to become their friend, and even to purchase a right to their commerce, by granting them a free trade to, while they exclude you from, the West Indies, and possibly by other concessions.

If a separation should unfortunately take place, the period cannot be remote when the other states will be in close friendship with England and you will have to seek for commerce and friends on the continent of Europe. What have you to hope for there? A temporary advantage, growing out of their immediate want of tonnage, which will speedily be supplied, and from time to time your shipping will be excluded from their ports, by recurring to the colonial system.

Will you substitute advantages so precarious and uncertain for those which you possess—incalculable in their extent, and interminable in their duration?

We live in an age which will excite the wonder, if not the unbelief of future generations.—It is not by the sword alone that the disturbers of the World's repose, whether French or English, achieve their votaries. In their train march civil strife, party, suspicion, jealousy, and hatred. These are their pioneers, and when they have made a safe lodgment in the devoted country, the main body of their troops advance—a battle is fought—and the nation ruined.

ALGERNON SIDNEY









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